

# OpenMRS Community & Nonprofit Strategy

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## Background

Over the past several weeks, in my new role at Regenstrief Institute, I conducted virtual interviews of the majority of the organic leaders within the OpenMRS community at the direction of Paul Biondich. These interviews revealed multiple and consistent themes of opportunity and concern about the current status of OpenMRS, including:

- an awesome and growing OpenMRS community
- increased implementations with varied results depending upon the implementor and available support
- increasing recognition of the central and critical role that OpenMRS can play in delivery of care, interoperability and improving health outcomes
- increasing request for delivery of enhanced product
- increased requests for support with implementations
- limited OpenMRS strategic planning given the changing perspectives around global HIT and the need for increasing interoperability, data sharing and point of care HIT support
- lack of daily program management
- inability to consistently deliver products on time
- inadequate support to respond to community volunteers in an efficient way
- insufficient support for implementers asking for technical assistance
- recognition that a decision about the future ability of OpenMRS to respond to these concerns was critical due to increasing need and potential community and user vulnerability if the above could not be addressed

I shared these findings at the recent OpenMRS Camp leadership retreat. Those leaders discussed these issues and responded in multiple ways. First, the attendees established strategic objectives for calendar year 2016. The attached document lists these goals. Additionally, there was a desire that the OpenMRS Inc. Board of Directors (BOD) be made aware of the current concerns and consider some proposed ways to mitigate them.

## Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective 6 focuses on ensuring that the operations of OpenMRS are maximized for efficiency and effectiveness for the community as well as external partners. While achieving this strategic objective will require additional funding to support proposed core human resources, this commitment to improved operations would enable the community to:

- Accelerate the delivery of needed functionality,
- Improve the visibility of OpenMRS,
- Better support the community members and end users, and
- Enhance quality and support for our implementations.

The Camp attendees concluded that an enhanced core team would be required to meet these needs. Currently, OpenMRS Inc. provides fundings for one individual, the director of community. Camp attendees requested that the BOD consider the following questions during their next meeting:

1. Is the BOD supportive of the community developing a small organizational structure in the near future that includes up to 10 OpenMRS Inc.-funded individuals?
  - a. An operational and fundraising plan would have to be created to know the exact number and roles, but initially these employees could include the following (in order of priority):
    - i. Operational lead for the OpenMRS Community
    - ii. Fundraiser for OpenMRS Inc (which could be outsourced)
    - iii. Communication and marketing
    - iv. Program manager (initially for software development and lifecycle)
    - v. Administrative person (50% time) to support operational lead as well as program manager
    - vi. Additional key engineering roles (up to 4) to support identified development needs as well as additional support for implementation
  - b. Funding could also consist of paying for some percentage of time of key volunteers within the community via grants.
2. If supportive, what role can the BOD play in fundraising to support this need?
  - a. The community recognizes that it has a critical role in fundraising also, but would benefit from insights into the potential role of the BOD in this endeavor.
  - b. Could there potentially be additional seats on the BOD to increase fundraising?
3. The OpenMRS community believes that extending our current collaborations and partnerships is a possible venue to achieve additional stability. These relationships can help ensure commitments that are consistent with the strategic direction of OpenMRS as well as potentially share development and resources consistent with that strategic plan.
  - a. Is the BOD willing to potentially sign these agreements after review and scrutiny?

The OpenMRS Community remains grateful for the active participation of the Board of Directors. The community and its leaders believe there are increasing opportunities for OpenMRS to extend development and implementation throughout the globe. Seizing this opportunity will help ensure that OpenMRS can meet these increasing health care needs and sustain and develop the implementer and user communities.

### **Additional Strategic Work of Community**

As outcomes of the OpenMRS Camp leadership retreat, the community is in the process of developing the following artifacts:

- an annual report for calendar year 2015,

- an operational plan to be created prior to 1 January, based on community input during the OpenMRS Worldwide Summit in December 2015,
- a projected budget based on this operational plan, and
- a metrics plan for evaluation and monitoring of OpenMRS software and community work.